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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

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COUNTRY Ecuador

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE DISTR. 7 APR 50

SUBJECT At+empt by Ecuadoran Government
to Discredit Guevara Moreno

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. The Plaza administration, under Defense Minister Manuel Diaz Granados' direction, has completed its plans to embarrass Carlos Guevara Moreno publicly, in the hope of eliminating him from the political scene or at least decreasing the effectiveness of his opposition to the government. The government's scheme is based on Guevara's alleged complicity in an illegal wartime (1945) platinum transaction while he was Minister of Government under Velasco Ibarra.
2. The government's version of the affair is that in 1945, when the U. S. Embassy in Quito was investigating clandestine Axis platinum deals, it was discovered that Juan B. Semeria of Cuenca, Ecuador, had several kilos of platinum which he had arranged to sell to an Argentine named Arocha. The U. S. Embassy arranged for one Enrique Herman to contact Semeria before Arocha arrived in Ecuador and obtain Semeria's assistance in exposing Arocha. Semeria was to deliver the platinum to Arocha as planned, after which Arocha was to be arrested and the platinum confiscated. The proceeds from the sale were to be divided equally between Herman and Semeria through arrangement with President Velasco Ibarra. However, Guevara Moreno learned of the transaction, had both Arocha and Herman arrested, and confiscated both the platinum and the 17,000 Argentine pesos which had been delivered by Arocha. The government alleges that Guevara Moreno and an intimate friend of his, Gonzalo Jacome R., former Director of Security, have personally profited from the platinum transaction.
3. Diaz Granados, Herman, and their legal advisers have decided that Herman, with Dr. Oswaldo Jaramillo Larrea and Dr. Delio Ortiz as legal counsel, should bring suit against Guevara Moreno, accusing him of having stolen 14 kilos of platinum and 17,000 Argentine pesos. Herman is to demand the percentage of the Argentine money which had been promised him originally. The case was to be formally presented to the local criminal judge on 8 March. However, for some unknown reason the case was not presented to the courts on schedule. On 16 March Herman was to present a petition asking that the following witnesses be summoned and their declaration taken under oath:

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Next Review Date: 2008

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Dr. Oswaldo Jaramillo Jarrea
Alfredo Charvet
X. Piana
Oswaldo Lugo
Luis de Nicolai
(fnu) Moreano, former director of the
prison where Herman was confined

It is believed that Elias Nader, who arrived in Quito from Panama on 11 March 1950, was summoned to testify in the case since it is known that he was also the possessor of platinum which was confiscated by the Ecuadoran government and later sold by Gonzalo Jacome to the U. S. Foreign Economic Administration.

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